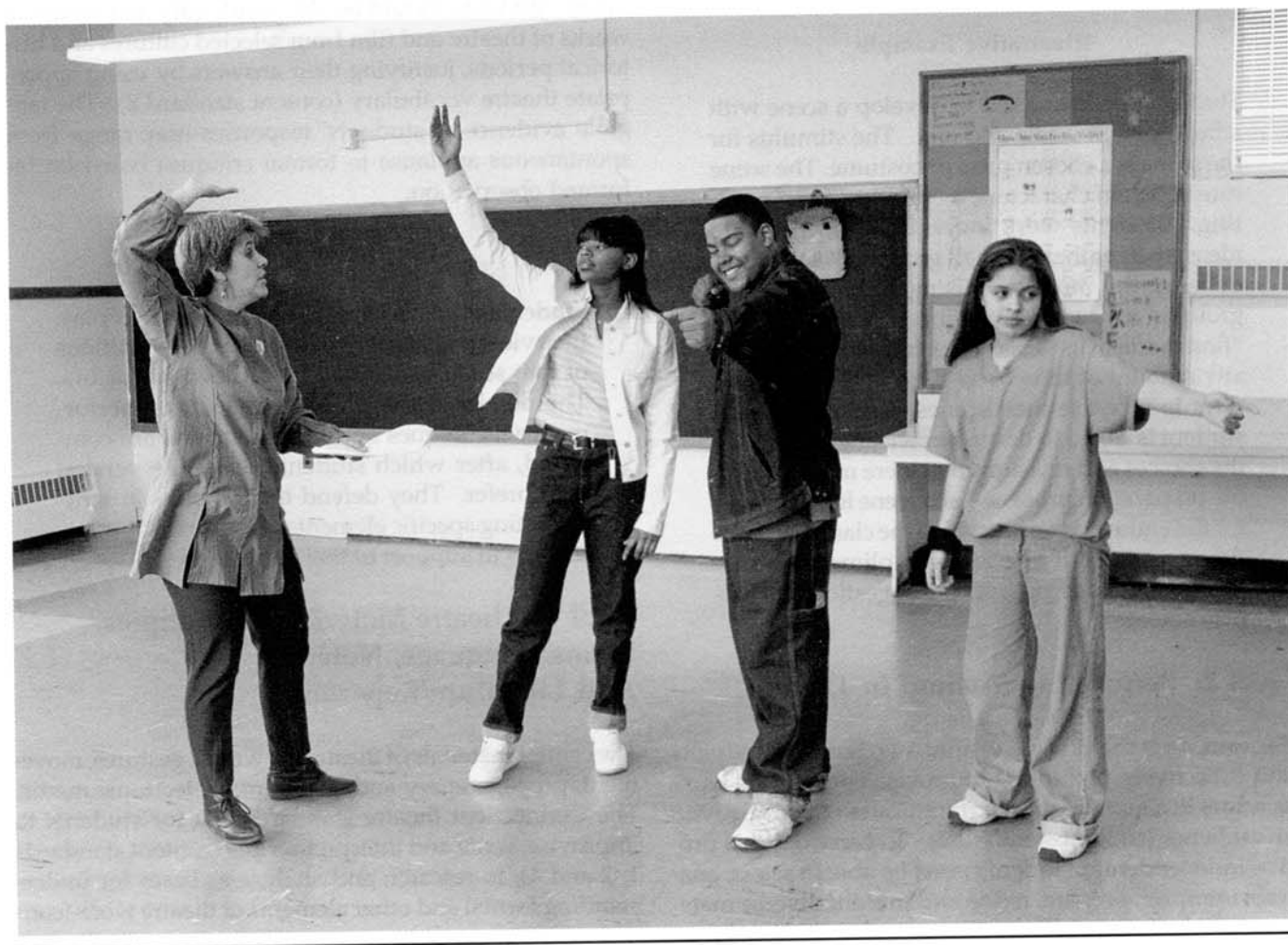


Applying The Program Goals To Theatre
 Content And Performance Standards In Theatre By Grade
 Connecticut Standards For Theatre Organized To Show Articulation (Sequence)
 Illustrative Learning/ Assessment Activities With Scoring Dimensions
 Glossary For Theatre Standards



NOTE: To use Section 2T most effectively, first read the common introduction to this chapter (pages 17-28).

APPLYING THE PROGRAM GOALS TO THEATRE

Goal 1: Creating In Theatre

Creating in theatre is a collaborative process in which students use words, voice, movement and visual elements to express and develop their own and others' concepts, ideas and feelings. The dramatic/theatrical works students create may consist of improvised or scripted scenes, plays, film, television and/or video, and may incorporate the use of elements such as puppets, masks, dance, music, the visual arts and modern technology. Students should imagine, improvise, experiment, research, plan, design, write, rehearse, revise, express and present works as playwrights, actors, designers and directors.

The theatre standard most closely associated with creating new theatre is content standard 1. The collaborative nature of theatre means that there are other contributors to any final creation/production, such as the designer, producer (content standard 3) and director (content standard 4).

Illustrative Example

Students are instructed to develop a scene with a beginning, middle and end. The stimulus for the scene is a chosen prop or costume. The scene must contain characters, a "problem" and a setting. Students work individually to generate ideas, then gather in small groups to select and develop the most promising premises. Each group is instructed to maintain a record of the "first draft" of its ideas. The groups may be given any amount of time from 10 minutes to several days to rehearse their scenes, after which each student is asked to discuss in writing and justify the choices and revisions that were made during the preparation process. Each scene is performed for the entire class, after which the class discusses the work, identifying and complimenting successful ideas and providing suggestions for improvement.

Goal 2: Performing (Acting) In Theatre

Performing is the process of students, both individually and collectively, presenting improvised or scripted work as actors in a manner that communicates effectively with an audience (content standard 2). To carry out this process independently, students must be able to select, analyze, interpret, prepare, refine and present diverse mate-

rials (content standards 3, 4, 5 and 7) while demonstrating the skills of movement, voice, imagination and self-discipline.

Illustrative Example

A class is divided into several smaller groups, each of which selects and prepares one of a number of available scripts for performance. During the process of working with the script, students make decisions about their interpretive vision of the work, set, costume and "blocking" (positioning on stage). After students present their productions, they explain and discuss with the class their choice of repertory and the reasoning behind their interpretive decisions.

Goal 3: Responding In Theatre

Responding involves students reacting to ideas, stories, scripts, designs, artistic choices and actions of others. Students should select, observe, describe, analyze, evaluate and explain works of theatre, film, television and video (content standard 7). Students should be able to describe how theatre, society, culture and history influence each other. Students should be able to identify and compare works of theatre and film from selected cultures and historical periods, justifying their answers by using appropriate theatre vocabulary (content standard 8). The tangible evidence of students' responses may range from spontaneous applause to formal critiques based on informed observation.

Illustrative Example

Students read and analyze a scene from a play, then view a video of two different interpretations of that scene performed by professional actors. The details of the professional actors' performance techniques and interpretations are compared, after which students select the version they prefer. They defend their choices in writing, citing specific elements of the actors' performances in support of their preferences.

Goal 4: Theatre Materials, Techniques, Forms, Language, Notation And Literature/Repertoire

The central materials of theatre are words, gestures, movement, props, scenery and, sometimes, electronic media. The Connecticut theatre standards call for students to improvise, write and interpret scripts (content standards 1, 2 and 4); to research and analyze as bases for understanding formal and other elements of theatre work (con-

tent standards 5 and 7); and to understand a variety of repertoire (content standard 8).

Goal 5: Importance Of Theatre

Theatre has played and continues to play an important role throughout history and in all cultures. The Connecticut theatre standards are designed to help students understand and appreciate this importance. For example, the Grades 5-8 performance standards for content standard 8 (history and cultures) call for students to “analyze the emotional and social impact of dramatic events in their lives, in their community and in other cultures.”

Goal 6: Theatrical Works And Characteristics

To be prepared to respond to and participate in theatre, students need to internalize a varied personal repertoire of theatrical works, describe the characteristics of those works (content standard 7) and understand them in their cultural and historical contexts (content standards 5 and 8). This guide does not propose a specific canon of theatrical works for students to study, instead leaving that to local decision makers. It does, however, provide a table illustrating how the theatre content of the 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress was distributed, as an example of how a district might select and organize the theatrical repertoire/literature its students view and perform (see Appendix I).

Goal 7: Lifelong Involvement In Theatre

The Connecticut standards call for all students to achieve levels of understandings and skills in theatre which prepare them for lifelong involvement as audience members and, for students who choose to focus on theatre at the secondary level, to reach a level of competence that will permit them to remain actively involved as creators and/or performers of theatre throughout their lives. A student who maintains lifelong involvement in theatre might:

- go to the theatre locally and in other towns and cities;
- become involved in community theatre or play-reading groups;
- volunteer backstage technical skills – building sets, sound and lighting – to local community theatre productions;
- financially support local theatre;
- read plays and screenplays or buy books, magazines and videos on theatre;
- introduce the next generation to theatre – support school theatrical productions, volunteer to help back stage, drive buses, make

costumes, organize school trips to the theatre; and

- view TV, theatre and film critically.

Goal 8: Preparation For Careers In Theatre

All of the Connecticut theatre standards provide important background for students who choose to pursue a career in theatre. Content standard 6 calls for students to make connections between theatre and daily life, including careers. The following listings are the kinds of experiences which prepare students for careers in theatre:

Actors

- study the texts of plays
- history of theatre courses
- performance experience in class and school
- theatre visits/internships
- view videos of theatrical productions and quality performances on film
- talk to professional actors
- movement and voice courses

Playwrights

- all of the above
- text-analysis courses
- writing courses
- scripting classroom improvisations and plays

Directors

- as for actors
- directing experience in class and school productions
- assisting the director on a major school production

Lighting, set, costume and sound designers

- design projects (lighting, sets, costumes, makeup, sound)
- history of theatre courses
- internships in local theatre
- theatre visits

K-12 Teachers

- all of the above
- peer coaching/rehearsal assistant
- assisting the director on school productions
- stage managing school productions

Therapists

- role-play/group dynamics
- adapting stories for plays/scripting structured improvisations
- internships in special facilities
- psychology courses
- history of theatre courses

Stage managers

- production projects – being responsible for production schedules/props
- assisting stage manager on a large school production

Critics, theatre writers

- viewing school, community and professional productions
- discussions of classroom theatre work, professional performances live and on video
- writing reviews for school newspapers and magazines
- analytical and critical writing exercises in theatre curriculum
- history of theatre courses

Film and Television directors/ producers

- as for directors
- film studies/history of film courses
- videography and multimedia courses

Theatre managers/administrators

- as for actors, directors, designers, stage managers and critics
- business management courses

Goal 9: Examples Of Providing Students With Opportunities For Community Participation

Students can:

- participate in community theatre groups and performances;
- participate in programs provided by professional companies;
- observe/attend performances or workshops given at schools by local theatre artists and groups;
- connect their work to cultural or service organizations, using theatre experiences;
- create theatrical performances for local community events;
- perform at hospitals, senior centers, etc.; and
- intern at community or professional theatres.

Goal 10: Connections

Content standard 6 focuses on connections between theatre, other disciplines and daily life. Examples of connections between theatre and other arts disciplines include the following:

- most theatre work involves the design of sets, props and costumes, thereby including the visual arts; and
- musical theatre work – including genres such as opera and the Broadway musical – by definition involves the skills contributed by musicians and frequently by dancers.

Examples of connections between theatre and non-arts disciplines include:

- Theatre and social studies
 - enact characters from various historical periods or situations;
 - analyze historical and cultural impact and influence of theatre; and
 - write dialogue for and role-play discussions of historical and contemporary issues.
- Theatre and science:
 - technical theatre (props, lighting and sound boards, machines for stage and character movement);
 - enact characters of important scientists and their discoveries/inventions; and
 - use movement and gesture to dramatize concepts found in science, such as life cycles, ecology, the food chain, positions of plants, etc.
- Theatre and language arts:
 - the art of theatre also is an important branch of language arts, involving all five elements of that discipline – reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.

CONTENT AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS IN THEATRE BY GRADE

Theatre is a composite art which combines playwriting, reading, acting, directing, designing and stage managing – and often singing and dancing – in the presentation of work. Creating, performing and responding to theatre also require a variety of sophisticated viewing and listening skills, coupled with a clear understanding of the context within which each work was created. The theatre standards represent the range of skills which are required for students to function successfully in the variety of roles which the informed theatre creator, performer and audience member must carry out.

“Theatre” includes live, improvised and scripted work, as well as film, television and other electronic media.

Content Standards

Students will:

1. create theatre through improvising, writing and refining scripts;
2. act by developing, communicating and sustaining characters;
3. design and produce the technical elements of theatre through artistic interpretation and execution;
4. direct by planning or interpreting works of theatre and by organizing and conducting rehearsals;
5. research, evaluate and apply cultural and historical information to make artistic choices;
6. make connections between theatre, other disciplines and daily life;
7. analyze, critique and construct meanings from works of theatre; and
8. demonstrate an understanding of context by analyzing and comparing theatre in various cultures and historical periods.

GRADES K-4

1. Create theatre through improvising, writing and refining scripts

Students will:

- a. collaborate to select interrelated characters, environments and situations for classroom dramatizations; and
- b. improvise dialogue to tell stories, and formalize improvisations by writing or recording the dialogue.

2. Act by developing, communicating and sustaining characters

Students will:

- a. imagine and clearly describe characters, their relationships and their environments;
- b. use variations of locomotor and nonlocomotor movement and vocal pitch, tempo, and tone for different characters; and
- c. assume roles (based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature and history) in classroom dramatizations.

3. Design and produce the technical elements of theatre through artistic interpretation and execution

Students will:

- a. design the playing space to communicate characters and action in specific locales; and
- b. collaborate to select and safely organize available materials that suggest scenery, properties, lighting, sound, costumes and makeup.

4. Direct by planning or interpreting works of theatre and by organizing and conducting rehearsals

Students will:

- a. collaboratively plan and prepare improvisations and demonstrate various ways of staging classroom dramatizations.

5. Research, evaluate and apply cultural and historical information to make artistic choices

Students will:

- a. communicate information to peers about people, events, time and place related to classroom dramatizations.

6. Make connections between theatre, other disciplines and daily life

Students will:

- a. describe visual, aural, oral and kinetic elements in theatre, dance, music and visual arts;
- b. compare how ideas and emotions are expressed in theatre, dance, music and visual arts;

- c. select movement, music or visual elements to enhance the mood of a classroom dramatization;
- d. identify connections between theatre and other disciplines in the curriculum; and
- e. identify various careers available to theatre artists.

7. Analyze, critique and construct meanings from works of theatre

Students will:

- a. identify and describe the visual, aural, oral and kinetic elements of classroom dramatizations and dramatic performances;
- b. explain how the wants and needs of characters are similar to and different from their own;
- c. articulate emotional responses to and explain personal preferences about whole dramatic performances, as well as parts of those performances; and
- d. analyze classroom dramatizations and, using appropriate terminology, constructively suggest (1) alternative ideas for dramatizing roles, arranging environments and developing situations and (2) means of improving the collaborative processes of planning, playing, responding and evaluating.

8. Demonstrate an understanding of context by analyzing and comparing theatre in various cultures and historical periods

Students will:

- a. identify and compare similar characters and situations in stories and dramas from and about various cultures, create classroom dramatizations based on these stories and dramas, and discuss how theatre reflects life; and
- b. identify and compare the various settings and reasons for creating dramas and attending theatre.

GRADES 5-8

1. Create theatre through improvising, writing and refining scripts

Students will:

- a. individually and in groups, develop char-

acters, environments and actions that create tension and suspense; and

- b. refine and record dialogue and action.

2. Act by developing, communicating and sustaining characters

Students will:

- a. analyze dramatic text to discover, articulate and justify character motivation;
- b. invent character behaviors based on the observation of interactions, ethical choices and emotional responses of people;
- c. use acting skills (such as sensory recall, concentration, breath control, diction, body alignment and control of isolated body parts) to develop characterizations that reflect artistic choices; and
- d. in an ensemble, interact as the invented characters.

3. Design and produce the technical elements of theatre through artistic interpretation and execution

Students will:

- a. describe and use the relationship among scenery, properties, lighting, sound, costumes and makeup in creating an environment appropriate for the drama;
- b. analyze improvised and scripted scenes for technical requirements;
- c. develop the environment using visual elements (line, texture, color, space), visual principles (repetition, balance, emphasis, contrast, unity) and aural qualities (pitch, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, expression) from traditional and nontraditional sources; and
- d. work collaboratively and safely to select and create elements of scenery, properties, lighting and sound to signify environments, and costumes and makeup to suggest character.

4. Direct by planning or interpreting works of theatre and by organizing and conducting rehearsals

Students will:

- a. demonstrate social, group and consensus skills by leading small groups in planning visual and aural elements and in rehearsing improvised and scripted scenes.

5. Research, evaluate and apply cultural and historical information to make artistic choices*Students will:*

- a. apply research from print and nonprint sources to script writing, acting, design and directing choices.

6. Make connections between theatre, other disciplines and daily life*Students will:*

- a. describe characteristics and compare the presentation of characters, environments and actions in theatre, dance and visual arts;
- b. incorporate elements of dance, music and visual arts to express ideas and emotions in improvised and scripted scenes;
- c. express and compare personal reactions to several art forms;
- d. describe and compare the functions and interactions of performing artists, visual artists and audience members in theatre, dance, music and visual arts;
- e. describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of theatre and other arts disciplines taught in school are interrelated;
- f. explain how social concepts, such as cooperation, communication, collaboration, consensus, self-esteem, risk taking, sympathy and empathy, apply in theatre and daily life; and
- g. explain the knowledge, skills and discipline needed to pursue careers and avocational opportunities in theatre.

7. Analyze, critique and construct meanings from works of theatre*Students will:*

- a. describe and analyze the effect of publicity, study guides, programs and physical environments on audience response and appreciation of dramatic performances;
- b. articulate and support the meanings constructed from dramatic performances;
- c. use articulated criteria to describe, analyze

and constructively evaluate the effectiveness of artistic choices in dramatic performances; and

- d. describe and evaluate the perceived effectiveness of students' contributions (as playwrights, actors, designers and directors) to the collaborative process of developing improvised and scripted scenes.

8. Demonstrate an understanding of context by analyzing and comparing theatre in various cultures and historical periods*Students will:*

- a. describe and compare universal characters and situations in dramas from and about various cultures and historical periods, create improvised and scripted scenes based on these universal characters and situations, and discuss how theatre reflects a culture;
- b. analyze the emotional and social impact of dramatic events in their lives, in the community and in other cultures; and
- c. explain how culture affects the content and design elements of dramatic performances.

GRADES 9-12**1. Create theatre through improvising, writing and refining scripts***Students will:*

- a. construct imaginative scripts and collaborate with actors to refine scripts so that story and meaning are conveyed to an audience.

2. Act by developing, communicating and sustaining characters*Students will:*

- a. analyze the physical, emotional and social dimensions of characters found in dramatic texts from various genres and media;
- b. compare and demonstrate acting techniques and methods from a variety of periods and styles; and
- c. in an ensemble, create and sustain characters.